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ABSTRACT

This family enrichment program is designed for parents having children in the Junior High Schools Dimensions for Living Family Life course. However, parents of any school-age child could benefit from the sessions. The three two-hour sessions in the home, each spaced one week apart, provide an opportunity for 10 to 12 parents to come together in a comfortable atmosphere and learn specific skills designed to foster the strength of family unity. Parents are invited to take part in a series of simple activities and tasks which they then will be encouraged to share at home with other members of their family. The activities in this program are not intended to place demands on parents but to provide some easily achieved goals to help improve communication and relationships. This program description, although brief, could serve as a model for the development of other family involvement programs. (Author)

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DIMENSIONS FOR LIVING

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FAMILY ENRICHMENT PARENT PROGRAM

CG 012276

lethbridge community college

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INTRODUCTION:

DIMENSIONS FOR LIVING FAMILY ENRICHMENT HOME PROGRAM

The three two hour sessions in the home each spaced one week apart provides an opportunity for 10 to 12 parents to come together in a comfortable atmosphere and learn specific skills designed to foster the strength of family unity. Parents are invited to take part in a series of simple activities and tasks which they then will be encouraged to share at home with other members of their family.

As each group will be meeting three different times members are invited to discuss the responses to the activities they shared with their families between each program.

Discussion is purely on a voluntary basis however it is helpful for other members within the group if we are able to discuss the positive aspects of these experiences.

Through the experience of coming together as a small group of parents we may all be able to better understand one another and our mutual concerns in raising our families in a growing community.

The growth and mobility that exists as families move across town, province or country adds to the stress and feeling of being alone in meeting demands of parenthood. How often we find ourselves in the position where we do not know our neighbors, families down the street or the parents of our childrens friends.

The activities in this program are not intended to place demands on parents but to provide some easily achieved goals to help improve communication and relationships.

This program is designed for parents having children in the Jr. High Schools Dimensions for Living Family Life course, however, parents of any school age child would benefit from the sessions.

Groups may be formed with both parents, or only one parent involved. The family as a whole is encouraged to take part at home in the activities conducted during the sessions.

A parent information packet is provided containing:

1. An introduction to the Dimensions for Living Family Enrichment Program.

2. The material we will be using in our first program which is Understanding Your Child.

3. Extra paper for some of the exercises involved or if you wish to make notes.

4. A directory of programs available to you in your community is also included. These programs offer further instruction courses in Communication and Family Relationships, Parenting Programs, Self Development, plus programs relating to specific areas related to family life.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

To enhance family relationships by improving the communication system within the family unit and by developing a general awareness of sources of assistance that are available to help enrich family life.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1 - To develop an awareness in parents of areas in family communication that may be enriched.

2 - To provide parents with easily achieved methods of improving the quality of family communication and relationships.

3 - To provide parents with an understanding of the communication skills that are being taught their children in the School Districts', Dimensions For Living and Family Life Education programs.

4 - To provide a social climate in which parents meeting together in a home or classroom may discover a greater awareness of their families and share a positive growth experience with other adults.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Parent	-	Jeanette Drader - Instructor with Centre for Personal and Community Dev. Parent Program
Parent	-	Irene Sparrow - Concerned parent representing the Public School System

DIMENSIONS FOR LIVING FAMILY ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

SESSION I

Understanding Your Child

a) Your intimate knowledge of your child.

b) Your child as an individual.

c) The positive strengths of your child.

d) Anticipating the "best self" of your child.

Session I is designed to help parents look at the positive attributes of their child. By building on the positive strengths of each child, parents may become more aware of their child's individual uniqueness. Recognizing and complimenting the strengths of each child will facilitate strengthening family relationships. Many parents most often focus on the problems and difficulties their child is experiencing and fail to recognize and encourage positive characteristics of each child.

A discussion period time between the program activities will be provided. This period will allow parents to share the positive characteristics of their children which will provide for opportunity to become more acquainted with one another.

Activities involved in Session 1:

1. Discussing the use of the Positive Approach.

2. Fill in the Positive Chart of your child.

3. Discovering your child's personality traits.

4. The positive contribution your child makes to the home and community.

5. Discuss the procedures of sharing the experience with family members.

Parents will be instructed to share these activities with their families at home. The instructions for each activity and how it may be used within the group is included in the "parent packet."

SESSION II

Demonstrating Appreciation Within The Family

a) The importance of individual growth.

b) Methods of recognizing and showing appreciation for the positive characteristics of others.

c) Building upon present relationships.

d) Family activities that build positive attitudes.

Session II focuses on the desire parents have to improve their family relationships by building on present relationships that already exist in the family. Parents are encouraged to become more aware of the good and kind deeds that exist in their families but often go unrecognized.

Parents will be encouraged to not only show appreciation for what their child has done but to also be able to show appreciation for the child as a person.

Activities involved in Session II:

1 - List examples of how your family shows appreciation and love of one another. Be prepared to share some of these with the group.

2 - How do you as a parent show appreciation to your child? List examples and discuss them.

3 - How do your children show appreciation to you? List examples; discuss.

4 - Write an appreciation note to each member of your family on paper provided entitled "appreciation note." Parents may wish to refer to the previous session's Positive Picture Activity remembering what they liked best about each family member, the qualities they possess and what makes them most happy when they think of each member of their family.

Parents will be encouraged to share this experience at home by encouraging family members to join them in writing appreciation notes to one another. They may start this activity that evening at the dinner table by placing appreciation notes under the plates of each family member.

SESSION III

Enjoying Being Together

a) The value of spending time together as a family.

b) Suggestions and skills which can help parents discover more effective family participation in activities to be enjoyed by all family members.

c) How family activities contribute to the growth of the individual members.

Session III is designed for parents to discover techniques to further improve family relationships by improving their communication skills. This program centers around family activities which provide opportunity for deeper appreciation and understanding of the needs of individual family members. Positive family communication most often occurs around a happy, successful family activity either relating to sports, a hobby or daily family tasks.

Activities involved in Session III:

1. Develop a list of six family fun activities the family enjoyed together. These will later be ranked.

2. The Importance of planned activities.

3. List a number of activities the family has not taken part in but could explore in the future.

Parents are encouraged to share these activities with their families by discussing how other family members perceived each activity. Parents will be encouraged to set a date on the calendar to plan for a future fun activity.

Concluding the three programs, parents are encouraged to continue using the techniques that were discussed in the group. A date could be set for two or three months in the future for a "follow-up" group session. This would be optional; however, it should be understood that if it is to be undertaken, the decision should include all group members.

Parents will also be made aware of family life programs presently existing within the community.

The program leader will be cognizant of the necessity for additional family life programs that could be offered to parents in the community.

LETHBRIDGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
LETHBRIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT #51

DIMENSIONS FOR LIVING PROGRAM SCHEDULE
TELEVISION AND RADIO

TV	RADIO		
Oct. 2	6	How Do You Say You Care?	Dr. C. Guenther
Oct. 9	13	Are You a Food Junkie?	Dr. Meintzer Debbie Redpath
Oct. 16	20	Losing Weight What Works What Doesn't?	Dr. Taylor Rich Bailey
Oct. 23	27	Do You Feel Like a Nothing? (Depression)	Bob Forsyth Dan Goodie
Oct. 30	Nov. 3	Preventing Teenage Suicide	Meno Boldt Bob Arms Mike Cormican
Nov. 6	10	We Need To Belong	Jack Flaherty Ernie Dawson
Nov. 13	17	My Teenager is Pregnant	Gordon Colledge Dr. Barbara Lacey
Nov. 20	24	"The Deadliest Drug" (Alcoholism)	Sherry & Harold Quigley
Nov. 27	Dec. 1	Buy Buy Buy (Credit)	Lorraine Moody
Dec. 4	8	Buying Christmas Toys	T.B.A.
Dec. 11	15	Does Everyone Have a Merry Christmas?	Jim MacNeil Loreen Harris
Dec. 18	22	Lets Have a Family Christmas	T.B.A.